

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
INDIAN AFFAIRS

January 24, 2014

Ms. Anne S. Ferro
Administrator
United States Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Ms. Ferro,


I am writing to urge you to declare a state of emergency and grant regional exemptions from Hours of Service (HOS) regulations for the Western Service Center. Your support for regional exemptions in the Midwest, Eastern, and Southern Service Centers has provided relief to these areas; however, many of these states in the Western Service Center, including North Dakota, are still experiencing propane supply shortages, and residents have had to resort to traveling long distances to get propane so they can heat their homes during these cold winter months, as well as dry their crops.

As you know, propane prices have increased to record highs stemming from high demand as a result of a wet corn harvest, the extreme temperatures this winter, and regional supply disruptions. Consequently, distributors have been unable to secure enough supplies for the residents in North Dakota.

Given the shortage and demand for propane, it is time for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to provide relief to North Dakota and others in the Western Service Center. In addition to declaring a state of emergency and granting regional exceptions from HOS in North Dakota, it is also critical that FMCSA extend the HOS service relief to Texas, which is home to the world's largest underground propane storage facility.

I have been in contact with local and state officials and federal highway administrators about the tight supply and rapid increase in prices of propane in North Dakota, and this waiver would support measures taken at the local level.

I thank you for your consideration of my request, and look forward to your assistance in this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

John Hoeven
U.S. Senator

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